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project papers

On the Common Christian Responsibility Toward Areas of Rapid Social Change
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EXCERPTS FROM A SOCIOLOGICAL SURVEY OF AN URBAN AREA IN WEST AFRICA

These excerpts as reproduced from

Report on a Social Survey of Sekondi-Takoradi

by

Prof. K.A. Busia, M.A., D.Phil.(Oxon)

(Published 1950 by the Crown Agents for the Colonies on behalf of the Government of the Gold Coast)

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REPORT ON A SOCIAL SURVEY OF SEKONDI-TAKORADI

By K.A. Busia, M.A., D.Phil. (Oxon)

Introduction

The Herrenalb report on the study of the Common Christian Responsibility Toward Areas of Rapid Social Change, drawing attention to the problem of community in the new urban, industrialized centers of Asia and Africa, suggests that, "in attempting to help develop a creative community within the structure of the modern city, the Church needs to take advantage of the existing natural associations, such as burial societies, collective savings groups, tribal unions and other semi-traditional organizations, etc., and build communities around them". There have been a number of studies made, both by anthropologists and sociologists, on the disintegration of the tribal communities and the breakdown of the old communal solidarity as a result of the rapid urbanization which accompanies large scale industrialization. However, there have been relatively few studies available on the roles played by the old communal groups, tribal or otherwise, either as resistive forces to social change or as cohesive forces to keep their members united in the face of strong, disintegrating forces. This particular issue is considered in a book "Report on a Social Survey of Sekondi-Takoradi" by Prof. K.A. Busia of the Department of Sociology, University College of the Gold Coast, published in 1950. Prof. Busia's survey of the port city of Sekondi-Takoradi made on behalf of the Government of the Gold Coast, is out of print and we therefore present here the two most pertinent chapters, chap. 6, "Association" (in toto) and chap. 5, "Municipal Government" (in part). However, in order that the contents of these two chapters may be seen in the context of the total study, we begin with Dr. Busia's own summary which constitutes the last chapter of his book.

Prof. Busia is a leading Methodist layman in the Gold Coast and a member of the Working Committee of the Department on Church and Society of the World Council of Churches.

I

(In the last chapter of the report, "Sekondi-Takoradi Social Survey - A Retrospect", (Chap. 11), Professor K.A. Busia summarizes the findings of his survey and makes the following comment.)

In the preceding chapters, the significant aspects of the life of the town have been surveyed. Attention was focused on the African population which numbers 43,323 out of a total of 44,130.

The non-African population of 807, however, exert an influence in the political, economic, and social life of the town, far greater than their number would suggest, and the predominant influence they exercise, especially in the economic and political spheres, significantly conditions the activities of the much larger African population.

It is in the economic sphere that the most notable changes have been made. Principally, there is an increasing differentiation and specialization of economic activity, and a rapid acceptance of, and adaptation to the industrial products of Europe and America.

Some of the changes that these have occasioned have been indicated: the growth of population, the decreasing importance of agriculture, the rise in the cost of living, the predominance of buying and selling, the earning wife, increase of salaried employees and wage earners, and the emergence of a new type of social organization based on occupational associations and common economic interests.

With this process of industrialization, new problems and hardships have emerged of which congestion and poor housing conditions, inadequate sanitary services, increase in crime, pauperism, malnutrition, unemployment, and destitution are indices.

Attention should also be called to the ambiguous patterns of behaviour which mark the new situation.

New economic activities and opportunities have led to a growing capitalism and acquisitiveness; to individualism and a new class structure; but elements of the old class structure and old kinship obligations remain tenacious, and slacken the pace of change; within a mixed population there is an increasing number of inter-tribal marriages, but these are opposed by old tribal sentiments old rites of marriage are adhered to, but the high cost is decried; old social values such as are connected with death or dress dictate conduct which in the new situation is injudicious, since it leads to extravagance and debt; similar ambiguous or even contradictory patterns of behaviour pervade other spheres of the life of the community.

In married life, because of the high cost, some have to delay marriage; there are difficulties in the control and upbringing of children; and frequent separations and divorces. These and other indices of marital instability have been indicated, and, in particular, the effects of the enforcement or acceptance of new codes of monogamy and marital stability which conflict with old usages of polygamy and traditional family obligations have been discussed.

With regard to training the young, it has been shown that many parents accept the responsibility for training their children, though a few repudiate the responsibility. For the community as a whole, it has been shown that the old ways of conditioning the child for adult life through participation in adult activities, principally within the extended family, have proved inadequate for the new situation; whilst the new system of formal education through institutional training is not yet comprehensive enough, nor sufficiently integrated with the life of the community. The problems that the situation gives rise to, such as strained personal relationships, juvenile delinquency, post-school unemployment, have been outlined.

In municipal government, new forms of authority backed by new sanctions have entered. The maintenance of law and order, the regulation of the life of the town, the provision of public services, and the exercise of authority, are vested in agents of the Central Government, the Town Council and the Native Authorities, and the powers and functions of each have been stated. The analysis showed that whilst tribal associations also helped in the maintenance of law and order through the arbitration of disputes, tribal loyalties at the same time hindered the development of municipal government, since many who were long resident in the municipality did not accept full civic responsibilities in the town, but considered themselves strangers, owing civic duties to their lineage town or village. This is another example of the ambiguous patterns of behaviour already noted.

As to religious practices, the influence of the Christian Churches as social and cultural agencies has been seen to be widespread, though another example of the contradictory patterns of behaviour is provided by the persistence of old beliefs and practices side by side with the new teaching and practice of Christianity, as evidenced by the popularity of the Tigare Cult. The Christian Church is popular as a social institution, but Christian faith and ideals have not penetrated deep into the life of the community.

The multiplicity of associations, religious, political, economic and social was found to be a significant feature in the development of town life, such associations being social agencies which bring together people having common aims or interests.

The forces which have caused the social change, and have given rise to the specific problems of town life have been apparent in the analysis given in this and preceding chapters.

The social problems of the town are indices of the change from a small, homogeneous, self-subsistent community to a large, heterogeneous, dependent community.

The chief, though not the only cause of the change, is economic. It is the new economic activities, and the development of a complex economic system that have thrown other social institutions out of gear, and produced a disintegrated and maladjusted society.

Prominent amongst the social institutions thrown out of gear is the extended family system which with its balance of reciprocities of rights and obligations, its wide network of relationships and activities, embracing the total life of the community, political, religious, economic and social, provided security and legal and moral sanctions of both private and public conduct in the old society.

Its collapse or inadequacy for the new situation has meant the weakening or in some instances, the breakdown of the moral and legal sanctions of the community. This fact came out repeatedly in discussing the problems of marriage, government, education, juvenile delinquency, unemployment and destitution.

Another thing which has also stood out prominently in the analysis is the important part that cultural values play in social organization.

The technology and material output of Europe and America have been quickly accepted, and to a less extent, their administrative machinery; but their ideas and social institutions have not been as rapidly accepted, and elements of the traditional culture and social organization persist side by side with, or in opposition to European ideas and values. This has given rise to, or heightened some of the problems that have been discussed.

It is the cultural values that dictate conduct such as we have noted regarding marriage, or dress or funerals; that is, they are not immediately bound to the rudimentary demands for food, shelter and bodily protection, but with the goals towards which the people direct their desires and attitudes. These set the framework within which the individual learns to cooperate with his fellows, and define the ends in the pursuit of which a community finds social unity.

We have seen the conflict of cultural values in monogamy versus polygamy; Christianity versus Tigare; matrilineal versus patrilineal inheritance; individualism versus traditional family obligations; elective municipal government versus tribal loyalties; in the discourtesy governing social relations in the new economic and governmental institutions; in the absence of a sense of social responsibility manifested in the indifference to, or the non-performance of civic duties; in the ineffectiveness of moral and legal sanctions; and most prominently and most obviously of all in increased crime, prostitution, juvenile delinquency, unbridled acquisitiveness, bribery and corruption, which are the symptoms of a maladjusted society.

These facts make it plain that the provision of material equipment and administrative machinery alone will not solve all the problems laid bare in the present Survey.

Development and Welfare plans aiming at material prosperity must go hand in hand with advances in morality and social responsibility; with the strengthening and indoctrination of common cultural values through education, in its broadest sense, in and for citizenship.

All the Government can do, in this regard, is to recognize the need, and help to provide the teaching; the learning and selection are tasks of the people themselves; it is the common cultural values they accept, and the degree of social responsibility they assume, that will determine the condition of their society.

II

(This, then, is how Sekondi-Takoradi was in 1950. It is of utmost importance that this picture of the city as a whole be kept in mind as one reads the following description of various types of "associations" functioning among the people of that city. We selected the Chapter on "Associations" (Chap. 6) to be reproduced as one of our Project Papers, because it brings out one of the most persistent and complex problems in connection with urban industrialism of the modern city. Breakdown of tribal solidarity and village community as a result of rapid industrialization and urbanization has been dealt with by many in the past. Relatively few studies have been made on the roles, positive and negative, which pre-urban associations of various kinds play in the rapidly urbanizing community - how they deter the progress of urbanization on the one hand, and, on the other hand, how they help to keep individuals from being completely "broken down" mentally, morally, and economically, as they are caught in the process of urbanization. It is also important to take a second look at the Christian Churches in this context and analyse their functions as one of those associations and in relation to those other pre-urban associations which persistently continue to function in rapidly urbanizing society.)

ASSOCIATIONS

In addition to the occupational and tribal associations to which reference has been made there are other associations of many different kinds which cut across occupational or tribal classifications. The multiplicity of such associations is a prominent feature of the social life of the town.

They are so numerous and so varied in character that no attempt is made to enumerate them all, still less to give a complete survey of their activities, but a brief account is given here with the object of indicating that there is here a most important aspect of the social structure of the town.

The interests around which they have been formed may be classified as political, intellectual, social or religious.

Religious Associations

Prominent amongst them are the Religious Groups each representing some branch of the Christian Faith, and centring its worship in a separate building.

The figures collected indicate that about one third of the population are members of Religious Organizations.

It should be explained that the definition of membership varies in the different Churches, and may not imply the same degree of attachment.

Besides those whose names appear on the Roll Books of the Churches, there are many more who would claim membership, though they do not fulfil all the obligations required of them, and are consequently not included in the lists of active members.

Within each Church are various associations providing not only for religious, but also for educational and social interests. The associations attached to the main religious bodies are tabulated in Appendix VIb.

It is through these associations that the cultural and social influence of the Churches is asserted.

As has been indicated, the population of the town consists of many different tribes, all gathered here for the purpose of making a living. There is little consciousness of civic responsibility, and no one is his brother's keeper.

In such circumstances, the Churches become important social agencies. The various Church Associations, Singing Bands and Choral Societies, Class Meetings and Sunday Schools, and Youth Associations attract many members and bring together people of different tribes who share the same faith; in this way they act as social agencies acquainting members of the community with each other. This makes up for the social isolation which some of the members would otherwise feel.

It is in the religious associations too that the Churches fulfil educational functions by teaching singing, reading, sewing and knitting, cleanliness, etc.; they also fulfil social functions by encouraging and sponsoring service to the sick and needy members of the community.

"Attendance at Church Services and the meetings of the various associations connected with them is prominent amongst the leisure activities of the town. The Sunday aspect of the town suggests that the Churches have a hold on its life; according to the answers given to a Questionnaire on the subject, an average of 70% of those on the active membership lists attend services regularly.

In addition to the weekly meetings and services, there are special celebrations like annual harvests or picnics to which members pay no little attention.

So much enjoyment is derived from them that there is usually a great deal of money expended on clothing and bands in preparation for the celebrations and outings.

One of the most popular criticisms advanced against the Churches is that they encourage extravagance by providing a regular forum for competitive dress display, especially by the women. It is a fact that the women provide themselv with many changes of dress for the purpose of attending Church Services, and that there are some whose attendances fall off, if they are unable to have frequent changes of dress. In this sense, the Churches influence the standards and cost of living.

Although there is some rivalry amongst the different denominations, two interdenominational societies both with large memberships have been formed. They are both of local origin. These are the "Hope Society" and the "Honesty Society". The former has 888 members and the latter 500 members in the town. There are junior and senior members of each society, and the membership is open to both sexes, literates, and illiterates alike. There are branches of these societies in other towns in the Colony and Ashanti.

Junior members pay an entrance fee of 5s.6d. and a monthly contribution of 1½d. and seniors an entrance fee of 10s.6d. and a monthly contribution of 3d. Both have distinctive uniforms, worn at meetings.

Their popularity is due to the fact that when a member dies, a donation, usually £3, is made to the bereaved family, and the Society turns out for the funeral. They are thus Burial Insurance Societies, guaranteeing a decent burial on which the community places a very high value.

In addition to this prime function, the Societies hold regular weekly meetings in which they have prayers, scripture readings and hymns, encourage friendships, and settle disputes amongst the members. Their annual picnics and church parades are also extremely popular, and a chief source of attraction to many members.

These associations fulfil two socially significant functions. In the first place, like the Churches, they bring together both literate and illiterate members of the community; in the second place they offer some sort of security from the hardships and isolation of town life to those who seek it, in Christian Associations founded on Christian Teaching.

Another interdenominational association is the branch of the YMCA at Takoradi. Its membership is open to Africans and Europeans and it stood at 80 at the beginning of the year.

The Association has a centre where a canteen is run; and for recreation, it provides Table Tennis, Billiards, and a Reading room. There is also an orchestra composed of members interested in music. There are services on Sunday evenings. As in other countries, the YMCA caters for religious and social interests, and promotes Christian friendships.

Taken together, the activities of Christian Churches and Associations pervade in a significant way the life of the community.

But as one watches the daily lives and activities of the people, and takes account of the rites connected with marriage, birth, death, widowhood, harvests

or installations to traditional offices, one learns that a great deal of the normal communal activities of the converts lie outside their Christian activities, and that for their influence, the Christian Churches are still alien institutions, intruding upon, but not integrated with indigenous social institutions.

Tigare

In this connection, the influence of the cult of Tigare should be noted. It has been established here recently as a rival Religious Association which has gained many adherents.

Earning a living in the town is, as has been shown, a precarious business. Prosperity is dependent upon forces over which a worker has no control. A sense of insecurity enters where a situation gets beyond control, and some seek security from traditional practices and beliefs. Accordingly the cult of Tigare which is a form of dynamism expressing the traditional belief in magic or an all pervading potency, has gained many votaries.

It was established at the village of Ngyeresia, one mile from Sekondi, about one year ago. Its devotees include Pagans and Christians of all denominations.

It is believed that the fetish helps in child-bearing, cures diseases, and protects against envy, and evil spirits. Accordingly, people go to it to seek protection from sickness and witchcraft, or from failure in business, or for help to bear children, or to gain wealth or promotion.

Tigare has been introduced from the Northern Territories. Its earlier home was in the French Ivory Coast. In the South, it has acquired so many accretions from adaptation to the beliefs and practices of the people that its origin would be hardly recognizable, but for the toga worn by the priests, and the cowries and the kola attached to the fetish.

This consists of a black bag containing cowries and kola. The latter is offered to devotees who seek its aid.

The Tigare fetish at Ngyeresia has the following commandments which devotees must promise to keep:

1) Thou shalt not steal.

2) Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife.

3) Honour thy father and thy mother.

4) Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.

5) Love thy neighbour as thyself.

6) Thou shalt not administer medicine of noxious or poisonous nature.

Devotees are also enjoined not to practice witchcraft, or cherish evil thoughts about others, or speak ill of them, or take the life of another.

If a devotee breaks any of these commands, he has to make full confession, do penance, and pay the necessary fee in order to be "sanctified".

There are regular celebrations on Sundays when the fetish may be consulted, and, after the traditional Akan religious practice, there are special forty-day festivals on the "Akwasidae" and "Wukudae" or "Anwonada".

For the purpose of the Survey, it is only necessary to note that many of the townspeople flock to Ngyeresia to participate in the singing and drumming connected with the rites of the fetish, and that Tigare is one of the agencies through which some of the people seek protection from the hardships of town life. A series of counts showed that an average of 260 votaries attend its weekly celebrations.

Social and Recreational

The associations which centre round social or recreational interests are many, and all that can be done here is to emphasize their growing importance in the social life of the town. A list of the more prominent ones are given in Appendix VIc.

The most enjoyed leisure activities are football, lawn-tennis, singing, drumming and dancing; and the associations catering for these interests are the most popular.

Other leisure activities which do not centre in permanent associations but are very widely enjoyed are draughts, swimming, the cinema, and ballroom dancing.

The Rex Cinema which has branches in Sekondi and Takoradi is regularly attended by large numbers of both young people and adults.

Ballroom dancing holds a prominent place in leisure activities. Formerly, only literate men and women took part in it, but an increasing number of illiterate women now attend ballroom dances which have become a regular, popular, and expensive social activity. Much money is spent on dresses, tickets and drinks, so much so that ballroom dancing is one of the subjects around which there is considerable social conflict. Some decry it as a source of many evils and express disapproval of the "modern woman" who has not the time for anything else but dancing; others define it as a most modern form of entertainment. There is no doubt about its popularity.

Whatever the particular interests which an association serves, it adds the additional benefit that its members take part in the funeral obsequies of a deceased member. In many instances, the members provide a ring, at a cost varying from 10s.6d. to £2.2s. for the corpse, or contribute money which they offer to the bereaved family.

Political Associations

Asafo Companies

There are three associations which may be classified as political: the Asafo Companies, the Ratepayers' Association, and the United Gold Coast Convention.

The Asafo Companies are a part of the traditional political structure. British Sekondi has one, and Dutch Sekondi has four companies. Every Ahanta belongs to one of these companies, on a hereditary, patrilineal principle.

The Companies were primarily military organizations, each company consisting of platoons, captains, flag-bearers, and drummers.

Their military functions have become unnecessary, but they continue to play an important part in the election and installation of chiefs, the annual Kuntum festival, and the celebration of the funeral rites of chiefs or their own members.

Company Captains (Asafohemfo) serve on Chiefs' Councils, and the Asafo Companies are consulted in the election of chiefs. Within the traditional constitution, they exercise an effective check on the chief and his council, and they have been known to initiate and effect the destoolment of unpopular chiefs.

In this way, the Companies have served as a political organ through which the popular will has found expression. But they operate only within the traditional political structure, and are therefore concerned only with the work of the Native Authorities.

The Ratepayers' Association

The Ratepayers' Association is an organization designed to meet the new urban situation where the population includes many more than the indigenous Ahanta.

All landlords and tenants who may vote at the Municipal elections are eligible for membership. Interest in the Association has been lukewarm, and its activities spasmodic; there have been only 75 members on its roll. Its meetings have been irregular, and have been held only when elections were imminent, and intending candidates desired to canvass for votes for election to the Town Council or the Legislative Council.

Efforts are being made to organize the Association more effectively, and three meetings have recently been held with the aim of getting the Ratepayers together so that they may "realise their civic rights and responsibilities", and "regard themselves as citizens and not strangers". About an average of 200 people have attended these meetings. New officers have been elected, and there are 83 names on the new roll being compiled. There is to be a membership fee of one shilling a year to meet secretarial expenses.

The apathy of the Ratepayers' Association, hitherto, is in conformity with the tendency, already noted, for many of the inhabitants of the town to regard themselves as "strangers" having no civic responsibilities, rather than as citizens having rights and duties in the town.

The United Gold Coast Convention

Sekondi is the headquarters of the country-wide political organization, the United Gold Coast Convention, which was inaugurated last year, and whose activities have been held responsible for the disturbances which took place in the country during February and March this year.

The aim of the organization is to achieve self-government for the country in the shortest possible time. Its meetings in Sekondi have always been largely attended, and there are many ardent supporters of the movement. It has 1,500 members in the town, many of whom are enthusiastic members.

The subject of associations hardly admits of statistical treatment. Moreover, detailed descriptions have been avoided, as the main object of the foregoing is to point to the existence of numerous associations as a significant feature of the social structure of the town, and one of the social changes that have resulted from urbanization. In a village community, the all-embracing network of kinship tends to bring the same people together for all significant social activities. In the town, many associations have sprung up to cater for different interests.

III

(In conjunction with this it is extremely interesting to note how the old tribal socio-political structure has been woven into the modern municipal government. We present here excerpts of chapter 5, "Municipal Government".)

All the activities of living go on peacefully because the people are protected, and to a certain extent constrained, by laws and regulations backed by coercive authority.

Within the town such authority is exercised by certain officers of the Central Government, the Native Authorities, and the Town Council. Their duties and powers are defined in ordinances, principally in the Native Authority (Colony) Ordinance, 1944, the Native Courts (Colony) Ordinance, 1944, and the Sekondi-Takoradi Town Council Ordinance, 1945. These may be briefly summarized in order to show how the town is governed.

The Native Authorities

There are four Native Authorities which have jurisdiction within Sekondi-Takoradi: The Native Authorities of British Sekondi, Dutch Sekondi, Ahanta, and the Ahanta Confederacy of which all the former three are members.

The Chiefs and their Councils are elected in accordance with Native Customary Law. A Paramount Chief is chosen from a particular lineage from several eligible candidates. His electors who form his Council are themselves similarl elected as representatives of lineages. Hereditary right and popular selection are thus combined.

The system fitted the social structure of the old, simpler society. Kinship was the basis of representation, and in a small, homogeneous community, the device enabled every member to be represented on the Council.

Traditionally, the single office of chief combined executive, legislative, religious and military functions. The office was essentially sacral, and the religious rites by which the community affirmed its sentiments of solidarity and continuity centred round the chief.

Within the town, the religious aspect of chiefship has tended to diminish in importance as few of the heterogeneous inhabitants participate in the rites.

The military duties which greatly enhanced the status of the chief have also ceased to be necessary. It is his administrative functions that now have the greater social significance.

Though the chief continues to be elected and installed in accordance with Native Law and Custom, he must be recognized by the Government before he can exercise the functions of his office.

A Native Authority is established by order of the Governor who also prescribes its powers and duties. Generally, it is charged with the maintenance of Law and Order in the area of its jurisdiction.

For this purpose, it is given powers to make by-laws and issue orders and rules on certain specified subjects. It is also given judicial powers, the limits of which are defined in the order establishing Native Courts in the area of its authority; it has a Police Force, and may have a prison; it is expected to establish a Treasury to meet its administrative costs and the provision of social services.

To enable it to fulfil these functions it is authorized to impose an annual rate and collect various tolls, fees, dues, and rents.

The powers of a Native Authority may only be exercised over a "person of African descent, provided that the mode of life of such person is that of the general community, and that such person is in his own country of origin subject to African Customary Law howsoever that Customary Law may be modified or applied".

The Native Authorities do not therefore exercise their powers over Europeans, Indians, Syrians, or people of nationalities other than African resident in the Municipality. The Governor in Council may extend the powers of the Native Authorities over such persons, but this has not been done.

For the purpose of the Survey, it is necessary to consider only what powers the Native Authorities exercises within the Municipality, and what services they provide.

The members of the Native Authorities and the Native Courts belong to the indigenous Ahanta tribe. The other tribal communities being "strangers" do not participate in their election, nor are they represented on these bodies, though they are subject to their jurisdiction.

The Native Authorities through their Confederacy Courts share in administering the Law both in Civil and Criminal cases.

Two Confederacy Native Courts sit in the Municipality: The Ahanta Confederacy Court A, and the Sekondi Court B. The former has a panel of 25 members, 48% of whom are literate, and the latter has a panel of 20, 20% of whom are literate. The Native Court is duly formed only if it consists of three or five members including the presiding member.

The limits of the respective jurisdictions of the Courts are defined in the Native Authority (Colony) Ordinance, 1944.

Though some of the cases heard deal with Native Customary offences, the procedure in the Native Authority Courts has tended to conform closely to the procedure adopted in the Magistrates' Courts.

The cases most frequently brought before the Native Courts are civil suits relating to debts and real property; nuisance cases; assaults; defamation of character; breach of the peace; and divorce and adultery cases.

The Native Authority Police Force assits in the maintenance of public order, and serves and executes criminal and civil processes issuing out of Native Courts. It is also empowered to effect arrests.

The Dutch Sekondi Native Authority is responsible for the management of th Adiembra State School on which it expended the sum of £521 during the last Financial Year (1947-8).

The Ahanta Confederacy Education grants to schools in the Municipality hav been estimated at £1,007 for 1948.

The only rate which the Native Authority levies in the town is the annual rate of 4s. per man and 2s. per woman payable by persons ordinarily resident in or owning immovable property in the town. "Persons" here means those of African descent, as defined above. The levy is paid begrudgingly. There are general complaints that the collectors are rude to the public, and that the levy is not justifiable since the Native Authorities do not provide any services for the townspeople.

The services which the Native Authorities perform in the town are those given through the Courts, the Native Authority Police, and Dutch Sekondi State Prison, and the Adiembra State School.

In performing these services, the Native Authorities are subject to the control and supervision of Government, exercised through the District Commissioner who supervises the work of their Courts, Treasury, Police, Prison and Schools, and advises on all aspects of their work.

The influence of the District Commissioner is felt in many ways. He is the agent of the Central Government responsible for the maintenance of Law and Order in the town.

He sits on many committees: Rent Assessment, Prison Visiting, Town Planning, Town Council, Finance, Bureau of African Industries, British Legion, Horticultural Board, and Social Welfare.

He is the authority for issuing Fire-arms, Warehouse, Steamer, Hunting and Letter Writers' Licences, as well as permits for drumming in the town.

In addition to reviewing cases and hearing appeals from the Native Authority Courts, he receives numerous complaints brought before him by residents over whom the Native Authorities have no jurisdiction, as well as by African natives and "strangers" who are within the jurisdiction of the Native Authority

Many of the "strangers" in the town usually have their disputes settled in arbitration by people of their own tribe, or some association or other which they have joined. But when this machinery breaks down, they resort to the District Commissioner rather than to the Native Courts, which many of them consider to be extortionate and not always impartial.

The Town Council

The Sekondi-Takoradi Town Council was established in December 1946. It replaced the Sekondi Town Council which had served the Sekondi town for 42 years.

The Council has a total membership of thirteen, composed of two official members nominated by the Governor, three nominated by the Ahanta Confederacy, one by the Sekondi and Takoradi Chamber of Commerce, and seven elected members representing the seven electoral Wards into which the town has been divided.

Anyone may be elected or nominated a member of the Council if he

a) is entitled to be registered as a voter and his name is on the Register of Voters;

b) is the owner of real or personal property in the town of the value of at least two hundred pounds, or is the occupier of premises in the Urban Area of an assessed annual value of at least twenty pounds and pays the rate thereon;

c) satisfies the District Commissioner that he has a reasonable knowledge of the English language and simple accounts.

The qualifications of voters are set in the Ordinance as follows:

1) Every person whether male or female shall be entitled to be registered as a voter for any one ward, and when registered to vote at the election of a member of the Council for such ward, who

   a) at the date of the publication of the notice by the Town Clerk has attained the age of twenty-one years; and

   b) for a period of at least six months immediately before the date of publication of such notice, has owned any assessed premises or has rented a living room in any assessed premises or has by virtue of his employment occupied any part of any assessed premises in such ward.

2) The husband or wife, having at the date of such publication attained the age of twenty-one years and resided in the town for a period of at least six consecutive months, or a person entitled to be registered as a voter and to vote as aforesaid, shall be entitled to register as a voter for any one ward and when registered to vote at the election of a member of the Council for such ward.

The Council may make by-laws, issue licences and permits, and impose fees and charges in respect of the services it renders.

Many of the townspeople regard the Town Council as a body that provides certain services, and collects various taxes, rates and dues. Little interest is taken in it as a governing body.

The small number that have registered as voters, or exercised their vote at the last election turns out to be a fair reflection of the popular attitude to the Council.

Tribal Associations

This is not only because Municipal Government is still in its infancy, but because many of the Africans who have come from other tribes and towns to live in Sekondi have other claims on their loyalties. They may be more or less permanently domiciled here, but they have strong attachments to their own homes.

This is a specially marked effect of the kinship ties which are the basis of African Social Organization. A person's membership of his lineage binds him for ever to the village where the lineage is localized. Wherever he may go, however long he may be away, he belongs to his lineage town or village. The economic and social obligations of kinship such as those connected with funerals, marriages, and divorce, as well as political allegiance and jural rights and status which are also tied up with kinship, keep alive his attachment to his native town or village. The town dweller does not neglect his kinship obligations.

The result of this is that very few of the large population manifest civic loyalty or responsibility for the town in which they make their living. They may own property here, marry and have children, but they are always considered, and they consider themselves "strangers".

It is remarkable that all the African members of the Town Council belong to the indigenous Ahanta tribe.

A member of the Town Council explained this by saying that the other residents who were not Ahantas did not bother to vote, and do not take much interest in the affairs of the town.

A prominent non-Ahanta, born and educated Sekondi, on the other hand, explained the fact by saying that the Ahantas were so cliquey that they would only have Ahantas on the Town Council.

There is some truth in both explanations; the fact is that old tribal loyalties persist in the new situation of urban life, and put a brake on the development of Municipal Government along Western lines.

The intense tribal loyalties are manifested in the many tribal associations in the Municipality. Examples of these are the Oguaa Korye Kuw (Cape Coast Union), the Edena Korye Kuw (Elmina Union), the Fanti Korye Kuw (Fanti Union), the Shama Union, and the old Mumford Youngsters Association.

Though some of the members of these Unions have lived in the town for many years, they continue to take keen and active interest in the affairs of their lineage home.

The members of one of these Unions by monthly contributions raised funds which they sent to help start a new school building in their village 160 miles away.

The organization of the Oguaa Korye Kuw may be given as an illustration of how these Unions operate.

All Cape Coast people resident in the town are eligible for membership. There are 300 members on the roll.

The aims of the society are to bring the Cape Coast people in town together, to give members financial assistance when necessary, and to maintain an interest in the welfare of Cape Coast.

The Executive Officers consist of a President, Vice-President, Recording Secretary, Correspondence Secretary, a Financial Secretary, and a Treasurer. There is a separate Finance Board which audits the accounts of the Union.

Members pay a "Foundation Fee" of 10s.6d. on admission, and a monthly contribution of 9d.

The Union meets once a fortnight, and all its affairs are conducted in Fanti. A general meeting opens with a hymn and prayer, and closes with a benediction.

When a member dies, the bereaved family receives from the Society a funeral benefit of £7. 4s. 0d. When a member's wife, husband, father, or mother dies, the member is given £2. 2s. 0d. A sick member receives a sick benefit of 5s.

One of the aims of the Union is to award scholarships to Cape Coast children, but there have not been enough funds to start the scheme.

There are branches of the Union at Takoradi, Tarkwa, Prestea, Bibiani, Bogosu and other places, and the issue of certificates of membership enables a member to transfer his membership to another branch.

Such Unions keep alive the sentiments of loyalty to the lineage town or village.

Similarly, the Kroo, Ewe, Ibo, Hausa, Northern Territory, Nzima, Ga-Adangbe, and Ashanti Communities have their own associations and tribal heads. The headmen usually have councils to assist them in the settlement of disputes among the members of the tribe.

The members of the tribal unions assist one another in many ways: over litigation, during illness or bereavement, or to find employment.

Most prized of all is the assistance the tribesmen give to one another in monetary contributions and in other ways at the burials and funeral rites of their members. The tendency to organize along tribal affiliations is strong and even in the new Housing Estates at Adiembra and Effia Kuma, tribal groups have got together and elected tribal heads to whom the affairs of the group are entrusted.

Tribal associations may be a hindrance to the development of a sense of civic responsibility by the "strangers" resident in the town, but they provide a means whereby people of similar interests are brought into social relationships; and more important still, through arbitration, and the control they exercise over their members, they are potent factors for the maintenance of law and order within the town. In this sense they form part of the governmental institutions of the Municipality.

The Central Government

The strict control exercised by the Central Government over the Native Authorities through the District Commissioner has already been indicated.

The Town Council is similarly subject to the control of the Central Government through the Governor.

The Council may not enter into contracts exceeding £500 or alienate or dispose of any immovable property without the written consent of the Governor; it may not borrow or invest money without his approval; its annual estimates of revenue and expenditure must be submitted for his approval, as also the by-laws which it may make for carrying out its duties.

If the Governor has reason to believe that the Council is not exercising its powers or performing its duties properly, or that its accounts require examination, he may appoint a suitable person to conduct an inquiry. In these and other ways, the Central Government exercises control over the Local Governing bodies.

In addition to these controls, the Central Government, as has been indicated, provides certain Municipal services exclusively, such as Medical, and Water Supply; and other services jointly with the Town Council, such as Health and Sanitation, or with the Native Authorities, such as the administration of the law (Courts, Prisons, and Police).

Many of the townspeople have little contact with the tribal Native Authorities elected on the narrow kinship basis. The services which these Native Authorities provide in the town are, in fact, ancillary to those provided by the Central Government. More cases are heard at the Magistrate's and Judge's Courts than at the Native Authority Courts, and the former have a much wider jurisdiction. The Police of the Central Government are more in evidence, and carry more authority and responsibility in the maintenance of law and order than do the Native Authority Police.

As the ordinary citizen goes about his business in the town, it is the services provided by the Central Government or the Town Council that are obvious to him; and in many ways he is also reminded that it is the higher authority exercised by the Central Government that maintains social order among the heterogeneous population of the town, and secures for it an orderly community life.

IV

(Besides the two chapters presented above, the report contains chapters on "Housing" (1), "Occupations and Earnings" (2), "Married Life" (3), Training at School" (4), "Social Failures: I Juvenile Delinquency" (7), "Social Failures: II Other Indices" (8). Dr. Busia's work is an excellent sample of comprehensive survey of a city undergoing rapid and radical social change. The survey was done under the auspices of the Government at Dr. Busia's recommendation, who in turn did the work with the assistance of two field assistants who had no previous experience of this type of work. Under such and many other handicaps, however, Dr. Busia combined in conducting his survey the methods of a sociologist and a social anthropologist, using the techniques of a) direct observation of behaviour, b) examination of documents, c) "free" interview, d) questionnaire, e) interview by schedule. The scope of the survey was designed to encompass the following areas:

1) Economic activities, occupations and working conditions.
2) Housing and Family Life.
3) Educational Institutions.
4) Religious Practices.
5) Local Government.
6) Health and Welfare, and group activities.
7) Unemployment, overcrowding, crime, juvenile delinquency, and other indices of social maladjustment.)

This we added here as a possible hint for methodology and technique of sociological survey in connection with our study of rapid social change.